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Filed : March 2, 2000

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously presented) A method of encouraging customers to provide reviews of purchased items, the method comprising:

receiving over a network an order from a first customer for an item purchased from an electronic catalog;

estimating by what date the first customer will have at least initially evaluated the item based at least on the item type;

initiating an electronic transmission, based at least in part on the estimated date, to the first customer on or after the estimated date of a message requesting the first customer to provide a review of the item to thereby encourage the first customer to provide at least one review, wherein the message includes a link to an electronic review form and activation of the link by the first customer causes the review form to be presented to the first customer;

receiving the review from the first customer electronically via the review form; and

individually presenting the first customer review in a group of reviews to a second customer interested in the item.

2. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the review is a numerical rating.

3. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the review includes a textual review comprising a plurality of words provided by the first customer.

4. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the review is a textual review, and in conjunction with presenting the textual review to other customers, indicating that the textual review comes from a purchaser of the reviewed item.

5. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising offering the first customer a reward in exchange for the customer providing a review, wherein the reward is provided if the review satisfies a first condition.

6. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the review request is provided via e-mail.

7. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the group of reviews are ordered based on at least a first reviewer characteristic.

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8. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the first customer review is presented via a Web page to the second customer in association with a name of the first customer.

9. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the link is a hyperlink to a the review form.

10. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising using a collaborative filter which, based at least in part on the first customer's review, provides the first customer personalized recommendations for items similar to the reviewed item.

11. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising requesting the first customer to review a seller of the purchased item on or after the estimated date.

12. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 1, further comprising:
receiving at least one e-mail address provided by the first customer, the email address being that of a person other than the first customer; and
forwarding the review to the e-mail address.

13. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the item is a book and the estimated date is based at least in part on the length of the book.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Canceled)

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently amended) A method of requesting a review of a purchased item, the method comprising:

receiving over a network a customer order for an item purchased from an electronic catalog;

inferring, using information stored in an electronic database, when the customer has evaluated the item based at least in part on one or more of a characteristic of the item or a subsequent purchase of another item;

providing over the network an electronic review request in response to at least the inference at a time spaced apart from the order, wherein the review request requests that

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the customer provide a review of the purchased item and includes a link to an electronic review form; and

receiving the review electronically via the electronic review form.

19. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 18, further comprising verifying that the received review is from a customer that ordered the item.

20. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 18, wherein the review is a textual review including a plurality of words entered by the customer, and further comprising presenting the received textual review to other customers in conjunction with an indication that the textual review is from a purchaser of the item.

21. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 18, where the received review is provided to other customers in association with a name of the customer that provided the review.

22. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 18, where the received review is used to recommend other items to the customer.

23. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 18, where the received review is used to recommend the item to other customers.

24. (Currently amended) The method as defined in Claim 18, where the inference is based at least on an estimation of how long ~~it will take to evaluate the evaluation of~~ the purchased item will take.

25. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 18 where the review request is selectively delivered on one of a weekend and a holiday.

26. (Currently amended) The method as defined in Claim 18, where item is a book and the inference is based at least on a customer survey on how long ~~it takes~~ consumers take to read books.

27. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 18, where the inference is based at least in part on the customer ordering a second item.

28. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 18, further comprising presenting to the customer a list of items purchased by the customer and asking the customer if the customer wants to review one or more of the listed items.

29. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 18, further comprising offering the customer a financial reward to be provided after receiving the item review.

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30. (Currently amended) The method as defined in Claim 18, where the item is a car and the act of inferring when the customer has evaluated the item is related to an estimated time ~~it will take for~~ the customer to drive a first amount.

31. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 18, where the item is a video and the act of inferring when the customer has evaluated the item is related to an estimated time until the customer has viewed the video.

32. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 18, where the item is an audio recording and the act of inferring when the customer has evaluated the item is related to an estimated time until the customer has listened to the audio recording.

33. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 18, where the item is a book and the act of inferring when the customer has evaluated the item is related to the type of book.

34. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 18, where the item is a gift for a recipient and the review request is provided to the recipient.

35. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 18, where the review includes a textual review.

36. (Previously presented) A method of requesting a review of a purchased item, the method comprising:

receiving over a network a customer order for an item purchased from an electronic catalog;

selecting a time to request a review of the purchased item, where the time is selected at least in part on an estimated evaluation period; and

providing over the network an item review request, including a link to an electronic review form, wherein the timing of the request is based at least in part on the selected time.

37. (Previously presented) The method as defined in Claim 36, further comprising providing the customer a request to review an item seller associated with the electronic catalog, wherein the timing of the request is based at least in part on the selected time.

38. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 36, wherein the electronic review form allows a customer to specify whether the customer review is to be presented to others with the customer name or is to be presented to others anonymously.

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39. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 36, where the review is used to generate a customer profile.

40. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 36, where the evaluation period varies from a first item to a second item.

41. (Canceled)

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SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW

A telephonic interview was conducted on August 26, 2004. Applicant's representative, David Weiss, and Examiner Van Doren participated.

Identification of Claims Discussed

Claim 18.

Identification of Prior Art Discussed

None.

Proposed Amendments

None.

Principal Arguments and Other Matters

The rejection of Claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 and 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph was discussed. Applicant's representative discussed the requirements to satisfy 35 U.S.C. § 101 and discussed how the claimed invention was within the technological arts and provided a useful, tangible result ("providing over the network an electronic review request in response to at least the inference"). Applicant's representative discussed the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, discussed the definiteness of Claim 18, and respectfully noted that the Examiner had not found Claim 18 to be indefinite in any of the three previous Office Actions.

Results of Interview

No agreement was reached with respect to Claim 18 as previously presented. The Examiner indicated that she would consider withdrawing the rejection of Claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 and 35 U.S.C. § 112 if Claim 18 was amended to recite that the inference is based on information stored in a database.